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EXAMINER

CHEA, PHILIP J

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2153

DATE MAILED: 12/22/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 09/852,336	<b>Applicant(s)</b> WORK, JAMES DUNCAN	
	<b>Examiner</b> Philip J Chea	<b>Art Unit</b> 2153	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 May 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☐ Claim(s) 76-118 and 120-147 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 76-118 and 120-147 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 83,116,147 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 27 August 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>11/8/02 and 4/8/04</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

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### **DETAILED ACTION**

Claims 76-118, 122-147 have been examined.

#### ***Information Disclosure Statement***

1. The information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on 5/8/01 was filed after the mailing date on 11/8/02. The submission is in compliance with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.97. Accordingly, the information disclosure statement is being considered by the examiner.
2. The information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on 5/8/01 was filed after the mailing date on 4/8/04. The submission is in compliance with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.97. Accordingly, the information disclosure statement is being considered by the examiner.

#### ***Claim Objections***

3. Claim 83, 116 and 147 are objected to because of the following informalities:
  - As per claim 83, note line 1, "one or ore" is apparently "one or more".
  - As per claim 116, note line 5, "one ore more" is apparently "one or more".
  - As per claim 147, note line 2, "one or more the" is apparently "one or more of the"

Appropriate correction is required.

#### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

4. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.
5. Claims 120 and 121 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.
6. Claim 120 recites the limitation "the connection threshold" and "the target" in line 2. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

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7. Claim 121 recites the limitation "the connection threshold" and "the searcher" in line 2. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

8. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

9. Claims 76-79,81-83,131,132 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Gilmour et al. (US 6,115,709).

As per claim 76, Gilmour et al. disclose a computer-implemented method, as claimed, comprising reporting matches to search criteria according to whether or not a degree of connection between a searcher and a potential target is within a connection threshold (see Fig. 18A [406-410], and column 23, lines 21-25).

As per claim 77, Gilmour et al. further disclose that the connection threshold is established by the potential target (see column 21, lines 21-31).

As per claim 78, Gilmour et al. further disclose that the degree of connection represents a number of inter-person relationships between the searcher and the potential target (see column 21, lines 21-31, where inter-person relationship between the search and the potential target are considered the terms the searcher is using to find the potential target).

As per claim 79, Gilmour et al. further disclose the matches being reported only so long as each inter-person connector between the searcher and the potential target satisfies access control criteria (see column 21, lines 21-31, where access control is considered the public and private portions of the user knowledge profile).

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As per claim 81, Gilmour et al. further disclose that some of the matches are reported anonymously (see columns 17 and 18, lines 65-67 and 1-2, where unrestricted access without authorization is considered being anonymous).

As per claim 82, Gilmour further disclose that some or all of the matches are not reported until permission is granted by an owner of a profile (see column 25, lines 7-20).

As per claim 83, Gilmour et al. further disclose that one or more of the matches is reported as a path to information regarding the potential target (see column 25, lines 11-22).

As per claim 86, Gilmour et al. disclose a computer-implemented method, comprising reporting potential matches to search criteria so as to include information regarding degrees of connection (see Fig. 18D [452], where degrees are considered the relevancy of a target) between a search to each individual represented by potential matches, wherein the individuals represented by the potential matches are within a specified connection distance from the searcher (see column 23, lines 21-25).

As per claim 87, Gilmour et al. further disclose that the connection distance is specified by each individual represented by the potential matches (see column 21, lines 21-31).

As per claim 88, Gilmour et al. further disclose that the connection distance is specified by the searcher as part of the search criteria (see column 20, lines 9-29, where connection distance is considered the threshold value).

As per claim 90, Gilmour et al. further disclose reporting information regarding the individuals represented by the potential matches according to access control instructions provided by those individuals concerning levels of details of their personal information which may be revealed to others (see column 21, lines 21-31, where access control is considered the public and private portions of the user knowledge profile).

As per claim 91, Gilmour et al. further disclose that the matches are reported in accordance with access control instructions provided along connection paths between the searcher and the potential target concerning levels of details of personal information which may be revealed to others (see column

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21, lines 21-31, where access control is considered the public and private portions of the user knowledge profile).

As per claim 131, Gilmour et al. further disclose that the matches are ranked according to the connection attributes (see Fig. 18D [442], where shaded region denotes ranking).

As per claim 132, Gilmour et al. further disclose the connection attributes comprise strength of connection (see column 23, lines 21-31).

10. Claims 102-105, 108-110, 112, 117, 122-125, 143, 144, 146, 147 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Weinreich et al. (US 6,175,831).

As per claim 102, Weinreich et al. disclose a computer-implemented system, as claimed, comprising a software broker configured to report matches to search criteria established by a searcher, the matches representing individuals having personal profiles that satisfy one or more of the search criteria, the personal profiles having been established using contact and relationship management tools to enter contact information and describe relationships to those contacts (see column 4, lines 5-19), said tools provided by the computer-implemented system and further configured to organize said contacts into categories; said matches being reported if individuals represented thereby are within a contact threshold (see column 20, lines 41-54).

As per claim 103, Weinreich et al. further disclose that each contact threshold is established by a user who established the associated personal profile (see column 14, lines 36-51).

As per claim 104, Weinreich et al. further disclose that the matches are reported only if trust criteria between the searcher and the individuals associated with the personal profiles that satisfy the search criteria are met (see column 14, lines 36-51).

As per claim 105, Weinreich et al. disclose a computer-implemented method, as claimed, comprising autonomously brokering connections between a searcher and a target so as to provide information regarding inter-personal connections between the searcher and the target according to

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access control instructions of individuals represented by the inter-personal connections regarding levels of details of themselves (see column 20, lines 41-54) and their contacts that may be shared with others (see column 12, lines 48-58).

As per claim 108, Weinreich et al. further disclose determining whether or not a connecting individual in an inter-personal connection path from the searcher to the target is a member of a group to which a succeeding connector in the path has granted access to the succeeding connector's contact information (see column 20, lines 41-54, where contact information is implied by searching for members connected to indirectly, meaning, contact information from another member).

As per claim 109, Weinreich et al. further disclose determining, for one or more connecting individuals in an inter-personal connection path from the searcher to the target, whether or not each preceding connector in the path has been granted by their respective succeeding connector a specified level of access to that succeeding connector's contact information (see column 12, lines 48-58).

As per claim 110, Weinreich et al. further disclose determining, for one or more connecting individuals in an inter-personal connection path from the searcher to the target, whether or not a preceding connector in the path has been granted a specified level of access to the connecting individual that is at least as high as a level of access that the connecting individual has been granted by a succeeding connector to which the connecting individual will refer a search request (see column 12, lines 48-58, where granting is considered confirming the validity of the defined relationship, which allows access to the database of a chain of users).

As per claim 112, Weinreich et al. further disclose access control instructions comprising defining criteria for responses to a search (see column 12, lines 48-58).

As per claim 117, Weinreich et al. disclose a computer-implemented method, as claimed, comprising autonomously brokering a connection between a searcher and a target using one or more profiles of contact lists of one or more likely connectors in a connection path between the searcher and the target in response to a search request submitted by the searcher; wherein matches to the search

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request are reported only if a degree of connection between the searcher and the target is within a specified connection threshold (see column 4, lines 5-19).

As per claim 118, Weinreich et al. further disclose providing information regarding inter-personal connections between the searcher and the target according to access control instructions of the connectors regarding levels of details of the connectors and their contacts that may be shared with others (see column 12, lines 48-58).

As per claim 122, Weinreich et al. further disclose that the target comprises a verifier of information of another (see column 22, lines 1-20, where verifier of information of another is implied by the N degrees of relationships; if the target is selected from a relationship of another member, it is implied that the member verifies the target).

As per claim 123, Weinreich et al. further disclose reporting verification information regarding the target (see column 22, lines 1-4).

As per claim 124, Weinreich et al. further disclose that the verification information is compiled using social network analysis (see column 22, lines 1-4, where geography and occupation are social factors considered in the verification to find relationships between people).

As per claim 143, Weinreich et al. further disclose that the relationship management tools are configured to analyze a user's communications with the user's contacts to determine natures of relationships with those contacts see (column 20, lines 41-54).

As per claim 144, Weinreich et al. further disclose that the natures of relationships include degree of relationship (see column 22, lines 1-20).

As per claim 145, Weinreich et al. further disclose that the relationship management tools are configured to analyze the matches to determine natures of relationships in chains of connections between the searcher and the individuals having personal profiles that satisfy one or more of the search criteria (see column 12, lines 48-58).

As per claim 146, Weinreich et al. further disclose that the target comprises an individual who has previously made a request for the searchers attention (see column 22, lines 1-20, where the searcher can



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find a first degree relationship which was confirmed earlier implying the individual has made a request for the searchers attention earlier).

11. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

12. Claims 134-138 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Walker et al. (US 5,884,270).

As per claim 134, Walker et al. disclose a computer-implemented method, as claimed, comprising integrating third party verification reports regarding user-created personal profiles with such profiles for use in a computer-implemented match-making system (see column 4, lines 26-30 and Fig. 7); and utilizing such verification reports in reporting matches to search criteria established by a searcher (see columns 17 and 18, lines 63-67 and 1-22), said matches based in part on strengths of relationship in associated chains of connection between the searcher and potential targets (see column 16, lines 7-20).

As per claim 135, Walker et al. further disclose that the matches are further based in part on a connection threshold established by the searcher (see column 16, lines 7-20, where the searcher can modify their search, implying setting a threshold).

As per claim 136, Walker et al. further disclose viewing of at least portions or all of the verification reports is restricted according to access control instructions (see column 18, lines 17-21, where verification is sent to the requestor and not the party that is getting verified).

As per claim 137, Walker et al. further disclose that the access control instructions are those of the verifier (see column 18, lines 17-21).

As per claim 138, Walker et al. further disclose that the access control instructions are those of the user being verified (see columns 17 and 18, lines 63-67 and 1).

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

13. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

14. Claims 80 and 92 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gilmour et al. as applied to claims 76 and 86 above, and further in view of Bukow (US 6,567,784).

As per claim 80, although the system disclosed by Gilmour et al. shows substantial features of the claimed invention (discussed above), it fails to disclose searching criteria comprising a personal profile that includes employment history.

Nonetheless, these features are well known in the art and would have been an obvious modification of the system disclosed by Gilmour et al., as evidenced by Bukow.

In an analogous art, Bukow discloses a searching system to match up workers with projects according to employment history (see Fig. 1 [138]).

Given the teaching of Bukow, a person having ordinary skill in the art would have readily recognized the desirability and advantages of modifying Gilmour et al. by searching profiles based on employment history, such as disclosed by Bukow, in order to notify suitable workers that meet project specifications (see column 1, lines 53-60).

As per claim 92, although the system disclosed by Gilmour et al. shows substantial features of the claimed invention (discussed above), it fails to disclose searching criteria comprising a personal profile that includes employment history.

Nonetheless, these features are well known in the art and would have been an obvious modification of the system disclosed by Gilmour et al., as evidenced by Bukow.

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In an analogous art, Bukow discloses a searching system to match up workers with projects according to employment history (see Fig. 1 [138]).

Given the teaching of Bukow, a person having ordinary skill in the art would have readily recognized the desirability and advantages of modifying Gilmour et al. by searching profiles based on employment history, such as disclosed by Bukow, in order to notify suitable workers that meet project specifications (see column 1, lines 53-60).

15. Claims 84,89,125,126,127, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gilmour et al. as applied to claims 76 and 86 above, and further in view of Weinreich et al. (US 6,175,831).

As per claim 84, although the system disclosed by Gilmour et al. shows substantial features of the claimed invention (discussed above), it fails to disclose degrees of trust between contacts specified through user profile criteria.

Nonetheless, these features are well known in the art and would have been an obvious modification of the system disclosed by Gilmour et al., as evidenced by Weinreich et al.

In an analogous art, Weinreich et al. disclose degrees of trust between contacts specified through user criteria (see column 2, lines 36-53 and column 4, lines 5-19).

Given the teaching of Weinreich et al., a person having ordinary skill in the art would have readily recognized the desirability and advantages of modifying Gilmour et al. by employing degrees of trust, such as disclosed by Weinreich et al., in order to find common connections between members and the people they know.

As per claim 85, Gilmour et al. in view of Weinreich et al. further disclose beginning with potential targets and working backwards to find connectors to the searcher (see Gilmour et al. column 24, lines 59-65, although not specifically stated, it is implied that by emailing the target, it is possible to work backwards to determine the searcher).

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As per claim 125, although the system disclosed by Gilmour et al. shows substantial features of the claimed invention (discussed above), it fails to disclose that the potential target comprises a verifier of information of another.

Nonetheless, these features are well known in the art and would have been an obvious modification of the system disclosed by Gilmour et al., as evidenced by Weinreich et al.

Weinreich et al. further disclose that the target comprises a verifier of information of another (see column 22, lines 1-20, where verifier of information of another is implied by the N degrees of relationships; if the target is selected from a relationship of another member, it is implied that the member verifies the target).

Given the teaching of Weinreich et al., a person having ordinary skill in the art would have readily recognized the desirability and advantages of modifying Gilmour et al. by employing verification of information, such as disclosed by Weinreich et al., in order to confirm that the searcher will find information from a target with valid credentials.

As per claim 126, although the system disclosed by Gilmour et al. shows substantial features of the claimed invention (discussed above), it fails to disclose reporting verification information regarding the target.

Nonetheless, these features are well known in the art and would have been an obvious modification of the system disclosed by Gilmour et al., as evidenced by Weinreich et al.

Weinreich et al. further disclose reporting verification information regarding the target (see column 22, lines 1-4).

Given the teaching of Weinreich et al., a person having ordinary skill in the art would have readily recognized the desirability and advantages of modifying Gilmour et al. by reporting verification information, such as disclosed by Weinreich et al., in order to confirm that the searcher will find information from a target with valid credentials.

As per claim 127, although the system disclosed by Gilmour et al. shows substantial features of the claimed invention (discussed above), it fails to disclose that the verification information is compiled using social network analysis.

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Nonetheless, these features are well known in the art and would have been an obvious modification of the system disclosed by Gilmour et al., as evidenced by Weinreich et al.

Weinreich et al. further disclose that the verification information is compiled using social network analysis (see column 22, lines 1-4, where geography and occupation are social factors considered in the verification to find relationships between people).

Given the teaching of Weinreich et al., a person having ordinary skill in the art would have readily recognized the desirability and advantages of modifying Gilmour et al. by employing social network analysis, such as disclosed by Weinreich et al., in order to determine if a person shares commonalities with the searcher to build new relationships.

As per claim 89, although the system disclosed by Gilmour et al. shows substantial features of the claimed invention (discussed above), it fails to disclose users' personal profiles that include information regarding contacts of each user.

Nonetheless, these features are well known in the art and would have been an obvious modification of the system disclosed by Gilmour et al., as evidenced by Weinreich et al.

In an analogous art, Weinreich et al. disclose users' personal profiles that include information regarding contacts of each user (see column 2, lines 36-53 and column 4, lines 5-19).

Given the teaching of Weinreich et al., a person having ordinary skill in the art would have readily recognized the desirability and advantages of modifying Gilmour et al. by employing degrees of trust, such as disclosed by Weinreich et al., in order to find common connections between members and the people they know.

16. Claims 107 and 147 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Weinreich et al. as applied to claim 105 above, and further in view of Gilmour et al. (US 6,115,709).

Although the system disclosed by Weinreich et al. shows substantial features of the claimed invention (discussed above), it fails to disclose access control instructions comprising hierarchical security levels for personal information.

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Nonetheless, these features are well known in the art and would have been an obvious modification of the system disclosed by Weinreich et al., as evidenced by Gilmour et al.

In an analogous art, Gilmour et al. discloses access control instructions comprising hierarchical security levels for person information (see column 21, lines 21-31, where access control is considered the public and private portions of the user knowledge profile).

Given the teaching of Gilmour et al., a person having ordinary skill in the art would have readily recognized the desirability and advantages of modifying Weinreich et al. by employing access control instructions, such as disclosed by Gilmour et al., in order to allow the user to control the timing, circumstances and extent to which it is made accessible (see column 6, lines 9-19).

As per claim 147, Weinreich et al. in view of Gilmour et al. further disclose that the access control instructions of one or more of the individuals represented by the inter-personal connections and the target require that a corresponding person be asked to personally communicate a response to a search (see Gilmour et al. column 21, lines 2-22).

17. Claims 111, 113, and 114 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Weinreich et al. as applied to claim 105 above, and further in view of Bukow (US 6,567,784).

As per claim 111, although the system disclosed by Weinreich et al. disclose that the information regarding inter-personal connections between the searcher and the target returned to the searcher depends upon information requested in the search request issued by the searcher, one or more criteria related to a searcher's personal profile (see column 20, lines 41-54), it fails to disclose one or more criteria related to a searcher's organization's profile.

Nonetheless, these features are well known in the art and would have been an obvious modification of the system disclosed by Weinreich et al., as evidenced by Bukow.

In an analogous art, Bukow discloses information regarding connections between the searcher and the target returned to the searcher depends upon information requested in the search request and one or more criteria related to a searcher's organization profile (see Fig. 1 [100], where an organizations profile is considered the project profiles being matched with potential worker profiles).

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Given the teaching of Bukow, a person having ordinary skill in the art would have readily recognized the desirability and advantages of modifying Weinreich et al. by employing organization profiles, such as disclosed by Bukow, in order to notify suitable workers that meet project specifications (see Bukow column 1, lines 53-60).

As per claim 113, although the system disclosed by Weinreich et al. disclose a computer-implemented method, comprising autonomously brokering a connection between a searcher and a target using contact lists of one or more connecting individuals in a inter-personal connection path between the searcher and the target in response to a search request (see column 4, lines 5-19), it fails to disclose the search request having been developed by the searcher in response to one or more prompts suggesting amendments which may be made to the searcher's personal profile in order to achieve objectives stated by the searcher in developing the search request.

Nonetheless, these features are well known in the art and would have been an obvious modification of the system disclosed by Weinreich et al., as evidenced by Bukow.

In an analogous art, Bukow disclose the search request having been developed by the searcher in response to one or more prompts suggesting amendments which may be made to the searcher's personal profile in order to achieve objectives stated by the searcher in developing the search request (see Fig. 1 [100], where an organizations profile is considered the project profiles being matched with potential worker profiles).

Given the teaching of Bukow, a person having ordinary skill in the art would have readily recognized the desirability and advantages of modifying Weinreich et al. by employing organization profiles, such as disclosed by Bukow, in order to notify suitable workers that meet project specifications (see Bukow column 1, lines 53-60).

As per claim 114, Weinreich et al. in view of Bukow further disclose autonomously brokering connections between the searcher and the target includes providing information regarding the inter-personal connection between the searcher and the target according to access control instructions of individuals represented therein regarding levels of details of themselves and their contacts that may be

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shared with others (see column 20, lines 41-54) and their contacts that may be shared with others (see column 12, lines 48-58).

18. Claims 128-130 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Weinreich et al. and further in view of Meyering (US 5,729,735).

As per claim 128, although the system disclosed by Weinreich et al. shows substantial features of the claimed invention:

- brokering a connection between a searcher and a target using contact lists of one or more connecting entities in a connection path between the searcher and the target in response to a search request submitted by the searcher, each of the contact lists being a portion of a user profile of an associated user (see column 22, lines 1-20),

it fails to disclose each user profile having associated access control instructions which determine portions of the user profiles which may be updated in remote user profile copies maintained by individuals other than the associated user to which the user profile pertains.

Nonetheless, these features are well known in the art and would have been an obvious modification of the system disclosed by Weinreich et al., as evidenced by Meyering.

In an analogous art, Meyering discloses user profile having associated access control instructions which determine portions of the user profiles which may be updated in remote user profile copies maintained by individuals other than the associated user to which the user profile pertains (see column 3, lines 12-22).

Given the teaching of Meyering, a person having ordinary skill in the art would have readily recognized the desirability and advantages of modifying Weinreich et al. by employing copies of files maintained by individuals other than the associated user, such as disclosed by Meyering, in order to allow a user to freely add, delete or modify data in the remote file, while still having a backup (see Meyering column 2, lines 2-18).



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As per claim 129, Weinreich et al. in view of Meyering further disclose that updating the remote user profile copies is performed automatically in response to changes in the associated user's user profile (see Meyering column 6, lines 45-62, where user's user profile is considered the master file).

As per claim 130, Weinreich et al. in view of Meyering further disclose that updating of the remote user profile is performed in response to actions on the part of each individual maintaining such a remote user profile copy (see Meyering column 4, lines 54-60, where remote user profile is considered the remote file).

19. Claims 93-101 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Walker et al. (US 5,884,270) further in view of Weinreich et al.

As per claim 93, although the system disclosed by Walker et al. disclose:

- a computer-implemented method, as claimed, comprising integrating third party verification reports regarding user-created personal profiles with such profiles for use in a computer-implemented match-making system (see column 4, lines 26-30 and Fig. 7); and
- utilizing such verification reports in reporting matches to search criteria established by a searcher (see columns 17 and 18, lines 63-67 and 1-22),

it fails to disclose matches being within a degree of connection between the searcher and an individual represented thereby.

Nonetheless, these features are well known in the art and would have been an obvious modification of the system disclosed by Walker et al, as evidenced by Weinreich et al.

In an analogous art, Weinreich et al. disclose matches being within a degree of connection between the searcher and an individual represented thereby (see column 22, lines 1-20).

Given the teaching of Weinreich et al., a person having ordinary skill in the art would have readily recognized the desirability and advantages of modifying Walker et al. by employing matches being within a degree of connection between the searcher and an individual represented thereby, such as disclosed by Weinreich et al., in order to find common connections between members and the people they know for other potential interests.

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As per claim 94, Walker et al. in view of Weinreich et al. further disclose that the verification reports are solicited independently of users to which they pertain (see Walker et al. column 18, lines 8-16).

As per claim 95, Walker et al. in view of Weinreich et al. further disclose that the verification reports are not editable by users to which they pertain (see Walker et al. Fig 2A [250], where verification database is separate from the databases of users to which they pertain).

As per claim 96, Walker et al. in view of Weinreich et al. further disclose that the verification reports are solicited in connection with updates to the personal profiles (see columns 17 and 18, lines 63-67 and 1-22, where it is implied that the data stored in the databases can be verified again after an update has occurred).

As per claim 97, Walker et al. in view of Weinreich et al. further disclose that the verification reports are not viewable by a user to which the report pertains (see Walker et al. Fig 2A [250], where verification database is separate from the databases of users to which they pertain).

As per claim 98, Walker et al. in view of Weinreich et al. further disclose the personal profiles include skills (see Walker et al. column 6, lines 10-39, where skills are considered resume).

As per claim 99, Walker et al. in view of Weinreich et al. further disclose that the degree of connection represents a number of inter-person relationships between the searcher and the individual represented by the personal profile (see Weinreich et al. column 22, lines 1-20).

As per claim 100, Walker et al. in view of Weinreich et al. further disclose that the degree of connection is established by the individual represented by the personal profile (see Weinreich et al. column 14, lines 36-51).

As per claim 101, Walker et al. in view of Weinreich et al. further disclose that the verification reports comprise aggregates of multiple individual verification reports (see Walker et al. Fig. 2C, where a list indicates multiple reports).

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20. Claims 106, 115, 116, 133, and 139-142 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Weinreich et al. as applied to claims 105 and 114 above, and further in view of Walker et al.

As per claims 106 and 115, although the system disclosed by Weinreich et al. shows substantial features of the claimed invention (discussed above), it fails to disclose that at least one of the access control instructions requires personal communication between the searcher and a corresponding connecting individual prior to direct contact between the searcher and the target.

Nonetheless, these features are well known in the art and would have been an obvious modification of the system disclosed by Weinreich et al., as evidenced by Walker et al.

In an analogous art, Walker et al. disclose that at least one of the access control instructions requires personal communication between the searcher and a corresponding connecting individual prior to direct contact between the searcher and the target (see column 18, lines 23-34, where corresponding individual is considered the verification authority).

Given the teaching of Walker et al., a person having ordinary skill in the art would have readily recognized the desirability and advantages of modifying Weinreich et al. by employing personal communication between the searcher and a corresponding individual, such as disclosed by Walker et al., in order to verify that the data the target provided was accurate.

As per claim 116, although the system disclosed by Weinreich et al. a computer-implemented method, comprising autonomously brokering a connection between a searcher and a target using contact lists of one or more connecting entities in a connection path between the searcher and the target in response to a search request submitted by the searcher (see column 22, lines 1-20), providing information regarding inter-personal connections between the searcher and the target according to access control instructions of the connecting entities regarding levels of details of the connecting entities and contacts specified in profiles of the connecting entities that may be shared with others (see column 12, lines 48-58), it fails to disclose at least one of the connecting entities being an organization having a profile that is an aggregate of one or more individual profiles of members of the organization.

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Nonetheless, these features are well known in the art and would have been an obvious modification of the system disclosed by Weinreich et al., as evidenced by Walker et al.

In an analogous art, Walker et al. disclose at least one of the connecting entities being an organization having a profile that is an aggregate of one or more individual profiles of members of the organization (see columns 16 and 17, lines 60-67 and 1-3, where an organization is implied by people candidates work with).

Given the teaching of Walker et al., a person having ordinary skill in the art would have readily recognized the desirability and advantages of modifying Weinreich et al. by employing organizational profiles, such as disclosed by Walker et al., in order to find new workers and their networks for projects.

As per claims 133, Weinreich et al. in view of Walker et al. further disclose that the connections are reported as potential matches ranked according to degrees of connection (see Weinreich et al. column 22, lines 1-20, where ranking is considered compiling relations).

As per claim 139, Walker et al. in view of Weinreich et al. further disclose that the verification reports are solicited independently of users to which they pertain (see Walker et al. column 18, lines 8-16).

As per claim 140, Walker et al. in view of Weinreich et al. further disclose that the verification reports are not editable by users to which they pertain (see Walker et al. Fig 2A [250], where verification database is separate from the databases of users to which they pertain).

As per claim 141, Walker et al. in view of Weinreich et al. further disclose that the verification reports are solicited in connection with updates to the personal profiles (see columns 17 and 18, lines 63-67 and 1-22, where it is implied that the data stored in the databases can be verified again after an update has occurred).

As per claim 142, Walker et al. in view of Weinreich et al. further disclose that the verification reports are not viewable by a user to which the report pertains (see Walker et al. Fig 2A [250], where verification database is separate from the databases of users to which they pertain).

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**Conclusion**

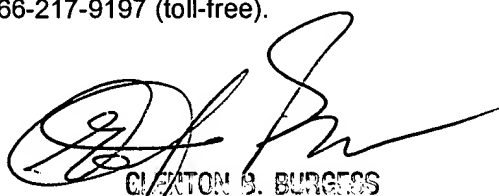
21. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Ainsbury; Robert D. et al.	US 6078924 A
Berson; William	US 5426700 A
Hartman; Richard L. et al.	US 5758324 A
Jacobs; Dwayne Charles et al.	US 5694595 A
McGovern; Robert J. et al.	US 5978768 A
Miller; Steven P. et al.	US 5475819 A
Nordman; Ian et al.	US 6678516 B2
Reuning; Stephen Michael	US 6381592 B1
Taylor; Jeffrey C.	US 5832497 A

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Philip J Chea whose telephone number is 571-272-3951. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7:00-4:30 (1st Friday Off).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Glenn Burgess can be reached on 571-272-3949. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



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